

The Fayette County Board of Health met on Tuesday, July 9, 2013 in the Public Meeting Room of the Fayette County Administrative Complex, 140 Stonewall Avenue, Fayetteville, Georgia.

Board of Health Members Present:

David Barlow
Thomas Faulkner, MD
Don Haddix
Lynette Peterson
Michael Strain, MD
Sam Sweat

Staff Members Present:

Glenda Bryant, RN, MN, FNP
Merle Crowe, BA, CCFO
Dennis Davenport, Attorney
Robert Kurbes

District Members Present:

Alpha Bryan, MD
Duane Fields
Debbi Heard
Wendy LeVan, RN, BSN
Carolyn Powers RD LD
Brigid Smith

CALL TO ORDER: Dr. Strain called the meeting to order at 7:30 AM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM APRIL 9, 2013: Motion to approve the minutes as written was made by Ms. Peterson, seconded by Mr. Barlow. The minutes were unanimously approved.

OLD/UNFINISHED BUSINESS/ PUBLIC COMMENT: There was no old business or public comment.

PRESENTATION OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2014 FINANCIAL REPORT: Ms. Brigid Smith presented the Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 Financial Report. Fayette County Health Department (FCHD) did not have to use current year fees for FY 2013, which meant that three revenue streams provided adequate operating revenue: Prior Year Program Income (PYPI) or fees received during FY 2012; Grant-in-Aid revenue from the state, and county funding. Because those three revenue sources were adequate for operating during FY 2013, all fees received in FY 2013 could be set aside for use during FY 2014, which Ms. Smith felt was the best way to operate. In addition to the above three revenue sources, FCHD received revenue of over \$98,000 from Medicaid Administrative Claiming Income, provided from the state for processing Medicaid claims; in the past payment of those funds had run several months behind, but should be sent more quickly in the future. Other revenue included funding from district office programs: Tuberculosis (TB), Children 1st, and the immunization program all contributed. Altogether, revenue increased for the year by more than \$180,000. Ms. Smith praised local staff for their hard work and dedication in turning around FCHD's previous budget shortfall. Ms. Smith also gave the board an update on the dollar amount and percentage of fees written off because of Federal program requirements. She felt that staff

was doing an excellent job in collecting payments due. She mentioned that there had been a budget revision at the end of the year as was usually done, but there was no change to the bottom line.

STAFF REPORTS: Women, Infants and Children (WIC): Ms. Wendy LeVan introduced Ms. Carolyn Powers as the new WIC supervisor for this region. Ms. Posers provided the board with statistics on patients served in the WIC clinic (Attachment #1), and the amount of income brought into the Fayette area from WIC clients cashing their vouchers. She mentioned the increase in percentage of breast feeding mothers, which had increased. She provided information on the weight of children and how this area population compared with the state statistics (Attachment #2).

Nursing Report: Ms. Glenda Bryant discussed recent activities of physical health staff: Morale Day in April, and was attended by board members Mr. Barlow, Mr. Haddix, and Mr. Sweat. Staff participated in team building exercises and had an enjoyable day. Ms. Bryant and Mr. Barlow attended the Georgia Public Health Association Conference, and Mr. Barlow attended the Board of Health member training there. They also attended Mr. Ronnie Mabry's event at the Fayette County Library. Ms. Bryant felt that getting out into the community brought public health services to the attention of the public. A preliminary meeting was held with Fayette Piedmont Hospital to discuss a possible drive-through flu shot event. Ms. Bryant also addressed the question from the last meeting regarding percentage of write offs, saying that figures from Ms. Crowe and the district billing staff showed the amount written off to be about .05% of total fees. District billing staff works to collect outstanding balances, doing everything possible to collect fees due. Outstanding balances are written off after eighteen months. She said that the community needs assessment would begin soon, headed by Cassie Sager, an intern from the district office. Ms. Bryant said that advertising of health department services was ongoing; she had received several positive comments about the ad that continued to run in the movie theater just outside of Peachtree City. There was also an ad in the Chamber of Commerce magazine the *Source*. The board commended staff for their hard work.

Environmental Health (EH): Mr. Duane Fields introduced Mr. Kurbes as the new EH County Manager. Mr. Kurbes thanked the board for the opportunity. He discussed the increase in workload for EH staff, saying that the number of permit inspections for sewage, restaurant and pool inspections had increased in recent months. He said that there was a time lag of 5-6 weeks before staff could get to sewage permit requests, and staff had not been able to meet state standards for restaurant inspections for the first time in his memory. He felt that Mr. Fehr's retirement, the loss of a staff member, and his own promotion had created the crunch. Mr. Kurbes mentioned the ongoing effort to bring Body Art businesses up to ordinances of Fayette County and the ordinances of some cities in the Fayette area. He mentioned that EH had participated in the *Face-to-Face* event sponsored by Fayette County and he had been surprised at the number of EH questions the public had asked. Mr. Kurbes mentioned that EH currently participates in the Department of Labor "*Experience Works*" program; he said that EH now had two people from that program, which provides clerical support so that EH staff could be out in the field. The hours of the two people placed in EH were increased to twenty each per week, thus providing one full-time position at no cost to the department.

Mr. Kurbes said he was working with Mr. Fields at the district office to address EH staffing needs: the short term solution to this problem would be to contract with another county for an EH staff member at least one day a week; the long term solution would be to hire another employee. He mentioned that Mr. Jeff Kilgore, one of the most experienced staff members, was planning to retire around January 2014. Mr. Kurbes felt that it would be best to put a staff member on board before that retirement if possible, due to the extensive training necessary for new employees. The board asked if it was possible to use retired EH staff to fill the gaps. Mr. Kurbes said the certification process was extensive and was a requirement for anyone working in EH, so he would rather hire someone rather than invest in training a retiree. He said that it was also important that EH staff not specialize in a certain program, that it was vital to cross-train all staff. Mr. Kurbes said that he anticipated that the Pinewoods Studio currently under construction would require many additional businesses to support it, meaning many more requests for more EH inspections. He mentioned that the Serve Safe program was only one program that had to be shelved to meet the increased demand on EH staff. Dr. Bryan commented that the extension office might be able to help with the Serve Safe program.

Mr. Fields said that he was working with Mr. Kurbes to address the EH staffing issue; he said he was negotiating with EH staff in another county to contract EH services one or two days a week. He thought that contract should be finalized effective August 1, 2013. He said that although building was presently increasing, that could change quickly, which would mean a reduction in fee income, and he did not want to hire staff only to have to let them go if building slowed down again. Dr. Bryan said that hiring new staff to replace retirees in order to transfer valuable knowledge was important. She said one example of increased training EH staff needed was the food service inspection process: it was totally different and more labor intensive than it was three years ago. She complimented staff on their successful effort of turning around the budget, and said that the budget should be thoroughly analyzed to determine if it would be advisable to hire a new EH employee in order to transfer knowledge before experienced staff retired. She said that during the time of building slowdown it had been necessary to reduce EH staff, but felt that given the current budget turnaround it might be time to revisit the staffing issue. She said that it was important to keep in mind that for every one dollar spent for salaries, there was an additional cost of 56 cents for benefits. She said that the cost of benefits had increased tremendously in the last few years, from about 30% five or six years ago to the current level of 56%, and that these costs were simply not sustainable. She said that getting creative with staffing was important, perhaps using part time employees or contracting with other counties would solve the problem.

Mr. Haddix asked about the previous proposal to increase EH fees, so that fees would come closer to the cost of providing the service. Mr. Kurbes said that before Mr. Fehr retired he had done a fee study. Mr. Kurbes thought that the study had shown that most fees were close to those charged by counties of similar size to Fayette County. He said that certainly an increase in fees could be revisited and felt there was room to increase some fees, if not all. The board requested an analysis of EH fees of surrounding counties from Mr. Kurbes for the next meeting. Mr. Sweat felt that the inability of staff to meet state restaurant inspection standards was a public health threat.

Mr. Haddix discussed the problem Peachtree City was having with failing septic systems, and said that many of those areas had applied for annexation into Peachtree City in order to get away from on-site septic systems. He did not expect the trend to decline.

Attorney Davenport recommended that the board make a motion to give Mr. Kurbes authority to sign a contract/Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on behalf of the Board of Health. Ms. Peterson made a motion to authorize Mr. Kurbes to hire an employee to replace Mr. Kilgore's position, seconded by Mr. Sweat. Mr. Haddix made a motion to authorize Mr. Kurbes to contract with another county for temporary help in EH effective August 1, 2013, seconded by Mr. Barlow. Both motions passed unanimously with no further discussion.

Financial: Ms. Brigid Smith's report is shown above.

District 4/Public Health: Dr. Alpha Bryan said interviews for a medical director were scheduled for July 17th. She asked for a board representative to be on the interview panel. She said that it was a requirement that at least half of the Boards of Health have a representative on the interview panel. Mr. Barlow volunteered and Dr. Bryan thanked him. Dr. Bryan said that the candidates had been pre-screened since it was recognized that the board members' time was valuable. Mr. Haddix said he thought he could come as well if he did not have a previous commitment he would let them know if he could attend. Dr. Bryan also thanked Mr. Barlow for attending the GPHA conference. She said that Dr. Fitzgerald had been an excellent advocate for Public Health since its inception as a separate department. The board thanked Dr. Bryan for her service as interim director.

Dr. Strain mentioned the memo from Attorney Davenport regarding the possibility of a bonus for employees. Mr. Davenport advised the board that such an idea was legally risky at best. The board decided they had looked into the issue but that it would not work, and to shelve the idea. Dr. Bryan said that she had reviewed the current pay of all positions in the district and that some of those positions had had salary adjustments, if supported by the budget; FCHD nursing and clerical had received some of those adjustments.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Peterson, seconded by Mr. Haddix. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 AM.

Michael Strain, MD Chair

Submitted by: Merle Crowe, BA, CCFO